

**FOREIGN CLAIMS SETTLEMENT COMMISSION
OF THE UNITED STATES
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20579**

IN THE MATTER OF THE CLAIM OF

GELABERT BROTHERS, INCORPORATED

Claim No. CU-2325

Decision No. CU 978

**Under the International Claims Settlement
Act of 1949, as amended**

PROPOSED DECISION

This claim against the Government of Cuba, under Title V of the International Claims Settlement Act of 1949, as amended, was presented by GELABERT BROTHERS, INCORPORATED in the amended amount of \$2,086.18 based upon the asserted loss of payment for merchandise shipped to Cuba.

Under Title V of the International Claims Settlement Act of 1949 [78 Stat. 1110 (1964), 22 U.S.C. §§1643-1643k (1964), as amended, 79 Stat. 988 (1965)], the Commission is given jurisdiction over claims of nationals of the United States against the Government of Cuba. Section 503(a) of the Act provides that the Commission shall receive and determine in accordance with applicable substantive law, including international law, the amount and validity of claims by nationals of the United States against the Government of Cuba arising since January 1, 1959 for

losses resulting from the nationalization, expropriation, intervention or other taking of, or special measures directed against, property including any rights or interests therein owned wholly or partially directly or indirectly at the time by nationals of the United States.

Section 502(3) of the Act provides:

The term 'property' means any property, right or interest including any leasehold interest, and debts owed by the Government of Cuba or by enterprises which have been nationalized, expropriated, intervened, or

taken by the Government of Cuba and debts which are a charge on property which has been nationalized, expropriated, intervened, or taken by the Government of Cuba.

Section 502(1) of the Act defines the term "national of the United States" as "(B) a corporation or other legal entity which is organized under the laws of the United States, or of any State, the District of Columbia, or the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, if natural persons who are citizens of the United States own, directly or indirectly, 50 per centum or more of the outstanding capital stock or other beneficial interest of such corporation or entity."

An officer of the claimant corporation has certified that the claimant was organized in the State of New York and that all times between May 29, 1953 and presentation of this claim on April 25, 1967, more than 50% of the outstanding capital stock of the claimant has been owned by United States nationals. The Commission holds that claimant is a national of the United States within the meaning of Section 502(1)(B) of the Act.

Claimant states that none of its two stockholders were residents of foreign countries and assumed to be citizens of those countries.

The record contains copy of claimant's invoice No. 12-4007-8 of May 29, 1958, reflecting the sale to Senores Red Coach Club of Havana, Cuba, of goods totalling \$323.00, as to which freight, shipping and other attendant fees increased the total to \$352.36; copy of his invoice No. 12-5015 of November 30, 1959, reflecting the sale to American Insurance Underwriters of Cuba, S.A. of Cuba, of goods totalling \$1,380.65; and copy of his invoice No. 12-5019 of December 10, 1959, reflecting the sale to Naviera Vacuba, S.A. of Cuba of goods totalling \$290.00 as to which freight, shipping and other fees increased the total to \$353.17.

The record also contains copies of correspondence from the Grace National Bank of New York to claimant in which the bank advised claimant that the below-listed amounts had been paid to Cuban banks in local currency but that the banks were awaiting dollar reimbursement releases from the Exchange Board, a Cuban Government agency:

<u>Consignee</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Date paid or acknowledged</u>
American Insurance Underwriters of Cuba, S.A.	\$1,380.65	December 28, 1959
Naviera Vacuba, S.A.	353.17	March 24, 1960
Senores Red Coach Club	212.36	August 30, 1960

Claimant states that it has not received the funds.

The Government of Cuba, on September 29, 1959, published its Law 568, concerning foreign exchange. Thereafter the Cuban Government effectively precluded not only transfers of funds to creditors abroad, but also payment to creditors within Cuba, by numerous, unreasonable and costly demands upon the consignees, who were thus deterred from complying with the demands of the Cuban Government. The Commission holds that Cuban Law 568 and the Cuban Government's implementation thereof, with respect to the rights of the claimant herein, was not in reality a legitimate exercise of sovereign authority to regulate foreign exchange, but constituted an intervention by the Government of Cuba into the contractual rights of the claimant, which resulted in the taking of American-owned property within the meaning of Section 503(a) of the Act. (See the Claim of The Schwarzenbach Huber Company, FCSC Claim No. CU-0019; and the Claim of Etna Pozzolana Corporation, Corporation, FCSC Claim No. CU-0049).

Accordingly, in the instant claim the Commission finds that claimant's property was lost as a result of intervention by the Government of Cuba and that, in the absence of evidence to the contrary, the loss occurred on December 29, 1959, as to \$1,380.65, on March 25, 1960, as to \$353.17, on August 31, 1960, as to \$212.36, the dates after the dates on which the collections were acknowledged, and on December 28, 1960, as to \$140.00, the date payment was due.

The Commission has decided that in certification of losses on claims determined pursuant to Title V of the International Claims Settlement Act of 1949, as amended, interest should be included at the rate of 6% per annum from the date of loss to the date of settlement (See the Claim of Lisle Corporation, FCSC Claim No. CU-0644).

Accordingly, the Commission concludes that the amount of the loss sustained by claimant shall be increased by interest thereon at the rate of 6% per annum from the dates on which the loss occurred, to the date on which provisions are made for the settlement thereof.

CERTIFICATION OF LOSS

The Commission certifies that GELABERT BROTHERS, INCORPORATED suffered a loss, as a result of actions of the Government of Cuba, within the scope of Title V of the International Claims Settlement Act of 1949, as amended, in the amount of Two Thousand Eighty-Six Dollars and Eighteen Cents (\$2,086.18) with interest thereon at 6% per annum from the respective dates of loss to the date of settlement.

Dated at Washington, D. C.,
and entered as the Proposed
Decision of the Commission

JAN 24 1968

This is a true and correct copy of the decision of the Commission which was entered as the final decision on _____

Edward D. Re

Theodore Jaffe

Theodore Jaffe, Commissioner

J. [Signature]
The statute does not provide for the payment of claims against the Government of Cuba. ~~It is only~~ made for the determination by the Commission of the validity and amounts of such claims. Section 501 of the statute specifically precludes any authorization for appropriations for payment of these claims. The Commission is required to certify its findings to the Secretary of State for possible use in future negotiations with the Government of Cuba.

NOTICE: Pursuant to the Regulations of the Commission, if no objections are filed within 15 days after service or receipt of notice of this Proposed Decision, the decision will be entered as the Final Decision of the Commission upon the expiration of 30 days after such service or receipt of notice, unless the Commission otherwise orders. (FCSC Reg., 45 C.F.R. 531.5(e) and (g) as amended, 32 Fed. Reg. 412-13 (1967).)

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